

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
MFA FINAL VISUAL PRESENTATION

by

LINDA LOUISE MAINES

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS

IN

SCULPTURE

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

WINTER 2002



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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled:

Final Visual Presentation

submitted by LINDA LOUISE MAINES partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Art.

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

GRADUATE STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

I hereby release the following works for incorporation into the University Collections,
University of Alberta, as part of the Master of Fine Arts Thesis Collection:

TITLE	DATE	MEDIUM	SIZE
Collective Agreement	2001	Welded Steel	54"x65"x36"

Insurance Value: \$2,000.00

The University of Alberta

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR LINDA LOUISE MAINES TITLE OF
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linda maines: mfa sculpture

metal health

15–27 january, 2002

opening reception

thursday, 17 january, 7–10 pm

gallery hours

tuesday to friday 10 am–5 pm

sunday 2 pm–5 pm

closed mondays, saturdays + statutory holidays

this exhibition is the final presentation for the
degree of **master of fine art** in sculpture

fab gallery

[FINE ARTS BUILDING GALLERY]

1-1 FINE ARTS BUILDING | 89 AVENUE + 112 STREET
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L i n d a w h o M a i n e s

Metal Health

Abstract Steel Sculpture
Exhibition as Final
presentation for Masters of
Fine Arts Degree

January 15 - 27, 2002

Opening Reception

Thursday, January 17th

7pm - 10pm

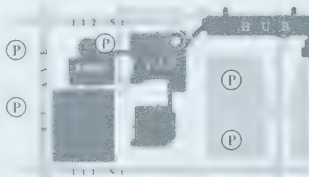
normal gallery hours: 10 am - 5pm

gallery closed Monday and Saturday.

JANUARY 2002

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		15	16	17	18	
20	22	23	24	25		
27						

University of Alberta
Fine Arts Building Gallery
1-1 FAB
112 st. and 89 ave.
780 492 2081



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Artist Statement

I am a nurse and have worked in the Operating Room at the University of Alberta for over 15 years. The title of my show, "Metal Health", represents what I believe is a very strong correlation between my experiences working in the intense atmosphere of the Operating Room and the character inherent in my sculpture. This is to say that the nature of my medical background has played a significant role in shaping the body of my thesis work beyond that of simple illustration.

To be sure, there are some literal references amongst the formal elements I have chosen to use in my sculpture. Of those, the most predominately recurring "shape" would be the cut sections of flattened pipe that resemble pillows. Pillows are often stored in the operating theatres to aid in positioning patients for various types of surgeries. However, there is very little else in the way of recognizable surgical "shapes" in my sculpture that would lead a viewer to conjecture my background as an O.R. nurse.

More importantly, I feel is the way in which several elements of similar shape will be piled or stacked together as a feature within the sculpture. Grouping, sorting, piling and stacking of equipment, surgical instruments and supplies is a constant practice in the OR environment. It now seems very apparent that I have intuitively been using these same methods to make my sculpture. The visible result is an obvious "part-to-part" formal sensibility.

What may not be so apparent is evidence of the psychological complexities that can develop working in the fast-paced and emotionally charged atmosphere of a critical care area. It is often necessary in situations of the most viscerally macabre and profoundly tragic for professionals to function outwardly with emotional detachment while they are experiencing intense feelings of compassion. These types of situations can create intense internal strain. As well, in such an advanced medical facility where the dividing line between life and death gets blurred by agendas to essentially "cure" death, it can prove exceedingly tricky for an individual trying to address their own issues of mortality.

One indication of my desire to offset these weighty issues besides the quirky titles may be in the implication of levity by the playfulness in the arrangement of the various formal elements. More obvious is the physical act of many sculptures rising off the ground on thin legs or small feet. Overall there exists a preponderance of negative space between elements creating a sense of sheerness and lightness.

Then there remains the simple fact that I choose steel sculpture with its three-dimensional durability as my mode of personal expression. It exposes my festering uncertainty about the "reality" of life and death that I feel compelled to create things that are categorically real in order to make a lasting mark in this world.

Acknowledgments

"Oh, young grasshoppers—snatch the welding rod from my hand."

I feel like I'm getting an *Oscar* or something, because I'm so grateful to have been able to accomplish this, that I want to thank everyone for their collective role in helping to get me here. Even the jerks deserve some credit. But because this is my moment, I won't give them any. So if you don't find your name mentioned below, it's because either I'm just an idiot, or you're just a jerk.

First and foremost I need to acknowledge my mother and father Rose and Herb for their 37 years of unbelievable parenting, support, and, generosity. My sister Laura, who took the university plunge 2 decades after high school and I'm so proud of her. My brother-in-law Shayne and my nieces and nephew Stefany, Morgan, and Mackenzie—you are all a delight to be around. My brother Glen, a hero even before he became a firefighter. My best friend Marilyn who suffered Nursing school with me and can still "bat it out" to the Cult: thank-you for so many things but most especially your razor-sharp humor and honesty. The benevolence of the royal couple Lori and Darren Rivet - you are both truly wonderful people.. The un-surpassed generosity of Brian and Carmen Los—I am indeed a lucky girl to know both of you. The dynamic duo of Holly and Mark Martinello--always thinking of others, thank-goodness one of them is me. The terrific typing and stupendous psychoanalytical skills of Sharlene Kaduk who weathered a Degree of her own. The overwhelming support and enthusiasm of the staff in the University of Alberta Operating Room where I have been gathering research for this show for 15 years—you are my co-workers, my friends, and my family, and I'm coming back in February to get reacquainted with you all again. Thanks in particular to Myra Campbell and Michelle Stewart for finangling my hiatus. The sage advice of the wise and worldly Mrs. Diana Clark—you have style to burn. Wayne McNamara—I could not have hand-picked a better neighbor or friend—I'm glad you're back. Bianca Khan—I was in awe of you when you were the Grad Student and I was a naïve little undergrad: I am forever grateful that you made me learn how to use the forklift.

The hip young people of SoSA —I am honored that you allowed me to share space in your inner circle of grooviness, (but now that I am a "master", Andrew, stop calling me grandma.) Thanks in particular to Rob, Cynthia, Andrew, and Stacy, for their strong backs and elbow grease that appeared as if by magic and got my scruffy sculpture buffed and moved into the gallery. Joan, Amber, Kim, and John--hope I can help you guys out as much as you have me.. Nick Rudnicki—you are a total loon and a bloody creative genius : thanks for making my pathetic, duct-taped welding boots look so damn fabulous! Thanks to Sue Colberg of VCD for the poster design, and printing wizard Jason of ZOT Media for his support of cash-beleagured fine art students. Kelly Kreuger --your positivism positively never wavers: thanks. The two angels of mercy in the FAB office: Sharon and Patti (sorry—I've blown your cover). The superbly organized Blair Brennan, and his band of merry gallery staff. Instructors Dave Cantine, Phil Darrah, John Freeman, Victor Chan, and Allan Antliff --invaluable lessons were seared upon my hide from your classes. The Film Library staff - thanks for your kindness and patience while I messed up your drawers. Members of my oral defence committee:--the daring and distinguished Dr. Gerry Moysa, Renaissance woman Jetska Sybesma, the talented and articulate Sean Caulfield, and of course, the incomparable Neil Fiertel: thanks for your kindness, support, and extra fries.

Of course, I cannot begin to express my appreciation to the two most, intelligent, kind, dedicated, generous, and completely silly people I've spent endless enjoyable hours in the company of these last six years at the U of A. Royden Mills and John McGie— you are two perfectly blended souls who helped keep me free from physical as well as mental injury through my many crisis. Yes, it's been a long, strange trip, and I'll miss you.

Finally, I would like to address Professor Peter Hide who I suspect would classify a show of sentiment here as "too decorative". Had you not set me straight 6 years ago, I might have wound up a suicidal CD rack maker. Thank-you for your straight-forwardness, experience, insight, and courage to let me make my kooky sculpture. And most of all, for showing me that being lazy isn't a problem—being mediocre is.

I would like to dedicate this show to my Grandma Frankland, who passed away at age 94 in September, 2001. She was a great artistic spirit.

Publications and Interviews

1. *"Steel With Feeling"*, by Dale Shekooley, SEE Magazine, Jan. 10 - 16, 2002, p.22.
2. *"Sculptor Inspired by Hospitals"*, by James Elford, The Gateway, Thursday, Jan. 17, 2002, p.14.
3. Interview for CBC Radio with Gilbert Bouchard, Arts writer for The Edmonton Journal, Tuesday, Jan. 15th, 2002.

Steel with feeling

Affinity for metal born at the hospital

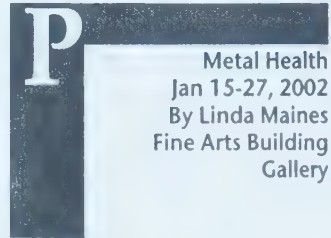
by Dale SHEKOOLEY

By her own admission, Linda Maines leads a double life. The 37-year-old nurse is tired and excited as she prepares for another evening spent working — not in a hospital, but in the sculpture studio at the University of Alberta. She is applying the finishing touches to her first solo exhibition, *Metal Health*, which serves as her final visual presentation for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Sculpture, and is an intriguing show to begin the New Year.

Born in Edmonton, Maines went into nursing straight out of high school. At 30, she decided to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts full-time while working part-time as a registered nurse. She discovered that she enjoyed working with wood and steel, and decided to do a Master's in Sculpture. The University Hospital was supportive, allowing her to retain her position for the two years of her program and work one or two shifts a month.

The name *Metal Health* obviously refers to her choice of materials. But Maines says her experience as a surgical nurse has crept into this work as well. The things she has seen working at the hospital are difficult to ignore. "Over the years, what you get exposed to... plays with your mind." Hence the titles she has chosen for several of her sculptures, including *Uvulaaah* and *Slipped Disc*.

"It's possible that I have an affinity for metal... [from working in operating rooms and] being surrounded by instruments, instrument pans and metal tables. I love working with it and manipulating it." Maines' favorite way of working with metal is to arrange found items together, a technique evident in this exhibition. "It's wonderful," she says. "You can just sort of set things together and zap it with the welder and it will stay that way."



Metal Health

Jan 15-27, 2002

By Linda Maines
Fine Arts Building
Gallery

Though her work varies in size, Maines prefers to work with metal that she can manipulate with her own strength. Maines has found it easier to sculpt some things with the aid of a forklift, but the finished work from these experiments lacked the feel of the pieces assembled by hand. The difficulties posed by moving heavy pieces and fusing them together have not deterred her, however. "I had never welded before," says Maines, acknowledging that welding was a bit frightening the first time she tried it.

Maines prefers to balance objects together before welding to compare different ways of positioning her sculptures. While assembling *Rusty Truss Pus Pockets*, one of her heavier pieces, a stack of 40-pound steel "pillows" made out of crimped pipe started to slide apart. She decided they added a more organic feel to what started as a very angular piece based around a frame of I-beams. She welded the pillow forms into place, freezing them in a naturalistic cascade of metal that makes them look soft and almost lightweight. "Nothing's pre-planned," she says. "It just sort of evolves on its own."

Though Maines says she has no colour sense, and places primary importance on form rather than colour, she has achieved some interesting finishes with her use of dull and lustrous paints as well as rust. Her aim is to unify the disparate components of the sculpture so that the result has not obviously been "put together."



Kevin Ma THE GAZETTE

MFA student Linda Maines stands with one of her giant metal sculptures that are on display at the FAB Gallery.

Sculptor inspired by hospitals

Former registered nurse turned MFA displays metal work at FAB

ART REVIEW

Metal Health

Featuring Linda Maines

FAB Gallery

Jan 15 - 27

James Elford

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Maybe it is because she has been manipulating cold, hard steel in the operating room for years as a nurse that Linda Maines can skillfully manipulate existing steel forms into art. Indeed, this close connection seems ever more likely given the close ties between her work and her experiences in the field of healthcare.

This reoccurring theme makes "Metal Health," seem like an immensely appropriate title for Maines' exhibit, as she manipulates steel into forms that often (but not always) reflect her years in the health field without recreating them. With the exception of a few pieces, obvious physical references in her work to the hos-

pital aren't that common, instead appearing more subtly. "I don't want to recreate [what I have seen at the hospital]," but on a deeper level there's something about it."

It was the stresses and the intensity of the OR that that can be seen in Maines' work that encouraged her to finally pursue a degree in the Fine Arts. After 15 years as a registered nurse in the operating rooms of the University of Alberta Hospital, Maines needed a break and realised that "if I don't do my BFA now, I won't do it."

With more of an inclination towards form and three dimensional work, Maines was drawn towards sculpture in particular because "it just seemed so simple and relaxing... very subconscious." A rewarding MFA soon followed. "By coming here," explained Maines, "I financed my own stress leave."

Such stressful work has a large impact on an individual, so it should be no surprise to note that Maines' work as a nurse can be seen throughout her art, either in the light-hearted and often graphi-

cally medical names given to her work, or in the actual forms themselves. In her artist's statement Maines indicates that "Growth, sorting, piling and stacking of equipment ... is a constant practice in the OR environment. It now seems very apparent that I have intuitively been using these same methods to make my sculpture." The effect lends a sort of subtle order to sculptures. Indeed, many of her pieces have a strong feeling of chaotic order, with form determined by Maines' selection and arrangement of pre-existing metal pieces.

Her work as a nurse can be felt in the sculptures in other ways as well. Spending most of her time working in emergency, Maines' work seems to reflect the spontaneous, almost subconscious thought processes and creativity that exist in her high stress workplace. Many of the pieces suggest action and movement, chaotically pieced together from steel into forms guided both by the inherent shape of the steel and by Maines' creative impulses.

Private Collections

Isabelle Gagne, Edmonton.

Carmen and Brian Los, Edmonton.

Glen Maines, Edmonton.

John and Rita McGie, Sherwood Park.

Roy and Linda Mills, Stony Plain.

Dr. Gerald Moysa, Edmonton.

Adam and Heather Murray, Edmonton.

Stefany Page, Edmonton.

Cynthia Sentara, Edmonton.

Slide List

<i>Title</i>	<i>H x W x D</i>	<i>Medium</i>
1. <i>Collective Agreement (2001)</i>	54" x 65" x 36"	painted steel
2. <i>Pinched Nerve (2001)</i>	23" x 33" x 16"	painted steel
3. <i>The Sky Is Falling (2001)</i>	10" x 33" x 13"	painted steel
4. <i>Clamp Down On Tetanus (2000)</i>	23" x 34" x 38"	rusted steel
5. <i>Pythagorean Pillow Party (2000)</i>	36" x 52" x 66"	rusted steel
6. <i>Poke Your Eye Out (2000)</i>	44" x 24" x 24"	painted steel, rubber
7. <i>Rusty Truss Pus Pockets (2001)</i>	39" x 55" x 34"	rusted steel
8. <i>Maharajah Pillow Plaza (2000)</i>	66" x 75" x 45"	rusted steel
9. <i>Sproing! (2001)</i>	71" x 35" x 35"	painted steel
10. <i>"welded to wheel to welded to whang" (2002)</i>	84" x 144" x 84"	rusted / painted steel
11. <i>Slipped Disc (2000)</i>	47" x 28" x 17"	painted steel
12. <i>Uvulaah (2001)</i>	37" x 31" x 27"	natural finish steel, wood
13. <i>Abominable Cavity (2001)</i>	33" x 25" x 28"	painted steel
14. <i>In a cauda davida (2001)</i>	34" x 67" x 34"	painted steel
15. <i>Plook Plook Plook (2001)</i>	19" x 41" x 28"	polished steel
16. <i>Universal Joint Reversal (2000)</i>	38" x 57" x 33"	painted steel
17. <i>Scope of No Return (2001)</i>	69" x 50" x 18"	painted steel

